The next issue of CHALLENGE will appear in three weeks, after which we will resume our regular biweekly schedule.

PERIODICO EN ESPAÑOL ADENTRO

CHALLENGE

FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM ★ LUCHE POR EL COMUNISMO ★ PLP

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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JUSTICE FOR RAYMOND

A RACIST SYSTEM DOES NOT DESERVE TO EXIST

THE BRONX, NY, August 3—The racist, capitalist system struck again on July 21, this time robbing the working class of 18-years-young Latin teen Raymond Chaluisant. Dion Middleton, an off-duty Black kkkop shot Raymond in the face for playing with a toy water gun. The murderer then fled the scene, leaving Raymond dead in a pool of his blood. A system that breeds racist murders of our class does not deserve to exist. Seek justice for Raymond by smashing racism with Progressive Labor Party.

Racist system strikes again

Members of PLP visited Raymond's family and friends shortly after the murder. We brought CHALLENGE to show support and draw a connection between what the family has endured and the experiences of other families terrorized by the criminal injustice system. These families include the family of Shantel Davis in Brooklyn who was also murdered by Black kkkop detective Phil Atkins in 2012 and the Rodwell-Spivey family who have been brutalized by police and face legal attacks in Newark. We also discussed the history of racist police murder in the Bronx specifically, including Ramarley Graham's murder in 2012.

Raymond's murder is another example of a senseless murder at the hands of a brutally racist system. Middleton, a cop in the Department of Corrections, has been trained to view Black and Latin children and workers as criminals that he can kill. PLP charges him and the whole system with genocide. It does not matter if the cop is Black or Latin if they are still carrying out racism. Having a city with a Black mayor, Black Attorney General, and a multiracial police force doesn't change the fact that racist terror is the name of the game.

Family, friends and PLP confront fascist court system

PLP joined Raymond's family and friends at the courts, where racist rule was on full display. Every time Middleton was brought into the courtroom, cops in uniform packed the room. Meanwhile, the judge told Raymond's supporters that anyone who made a disturbance would be asked to leave, that we must remain silent, and that our movements would be read as a threat so remain seated until told otherwise. The family had pictures and protest signs that they were prohibited from bringing inside. The racist intimidation, along with social control that demands respect for an utterly disrespectful system, points to who the government serves and protects—the capitalist class.

For Raymond and too many other names, smash racist police terror with communist revolution

For capitalists, public murder is a time-tested tool of social control and discipline of the working class. It is designed to frighten other workers into submission and stop rebellions before they start. In the U.S., the fugitive slave catchers are the ancestors of the police system. Yesterday's ku klux klan is today's klan in blue.

Justice = no more racist murders

Middleton was indicted for second degree murder, first-degree manslaughter, and second-degree manslaughter. He has been suspended without pay, but he made $221,684 last year (New York Times, 7/22). Regardless of whether or not Middleton ends up being convicted, there is no justice in a racist system that makes such murders a daily occurance. Nonetheless, we will stand by the family at the next court appearance (which is scheduled for August 22) and never forget what happened to Raymond.

It is possible that the racist city government, whose officers regularly criminalize and brutalize Black and Latin workers and youth, may scapegoat Middleton for the murder since he fled the scene of the crime.

A city commissioner claimed his actions were "in no way a reflection of the [corrections and police] officers'' despite the racist and sexist jail practices that have left a trail of dead bodies in NYC. These include our working-class siblings Kyam Livingston, Layleen Polanco, and too many names.

KKKops and kkkourts blame the victim

The NYPD quickly came to Middleton's aid by blaming Raymond for having a gel-bead water toy gun they considered an "air rifle" and illegal. The cops announced the same day on Twitter that anyone with such a water gun would be considered a criminal.

The kops, kourts, and klan officers' union would love for us to ignore that Raymond's water toy gun found with his body was white and orange. The racists also want us to ignore the lack of evidence that he even used the water gun on Murderer Middleton. The bosses' media has also repeatedly blamed a TikTok trend for Raymond's death, misleading workers to blame youth, rather than the killer kops for his death.

As Raymond's sister Jiraida pointed out, local Black and Latin youth were "just having fun…The whole neighborhood was having a water gun fight. It was 90 degrees." In a capitalist system that superexploits Black and Latin workers, criminalizes the behavior of our children, and brutalizes the sections of the working class with the least to lose—even kids having fun is dangerous under capitalism. A system that criminalizes and KILLS youth for having fun does not deserve to exist.

Fight for communism

This is why PLP fights for communism, a system run for and by the whole working class, where racism and sexism will be the things that are considered illegal. True justice will mean not only jailing murderers like Middleton but ensuring that nothing like this ever happens again. We know this will not happen tomorrow, but we can fight and win a communist future where it is a reality.✪

JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

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SCAN ME

OUR FIGHT

✯Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

✯The dictatorship of the working class — communism—can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

✯Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

✯While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

✯Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society's benefits and burdens.

✯Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

✯Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women— sexism—and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

✯Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

✯Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

✯Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

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Editorial

Uprising in DRC

Burning down the house: Workers attack UN criminals

In late July, hundreds of courageous workers responded to the latest crisis of capitalism by storming United Nations outposts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Workers' lives everywhere have been made even more precarious by the imperialist bosses' war in Ukraine, which has triggered astronomical hikes in the costs of fertilizer, food, and fuel. In recent months in the DRC, an additional million people have fallen below the poverty line (ebrary.ifpri.org). These workers also face ever-mounting terror from mineral-hungry local gangs, government thugs, and Chinese imperialist mining companies. They declared to the world they'd had enough by raiding and setting fire to buildings in three cities that house MONUSCO, the UN's "stabilization" mission—which has done nothing to make the DRC more stable since it entered the country in 1999. The UN "peacekeepers" responded with live fire that killed more than 30 demonstrators (msn.com, 8/2).

Much like the storming in Sri Lanka two weeks earlier, the uprising in the DRC reflects the disgust of workers everywhere with the bosses' political repression, bottomless greed, and vicious exploitation. Capitalism can never provide stability or peace for the international working class. Only communist revolution, led by Progressive Labor Party, can solve the never-ending capitalist crisis of inflation, depressions, and inter-imperialist wars for profit. Only a communist world can stamp out racism, sexism, and the rulers' state terror.

United Nations "aid" sham

Since the end of World War II, a period of global domination by U.S. imperialism, the United Nations has proven at best ineffective and at worst complicit in making horrific conditions worse for our class. Throughout the world, workers have developed a deep hatred of the UN armed criminals who protect U.S.-aligned imperialist profiteers at the expense of workers' lives and safety. After the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, racist military forces in MINUSTAH (UN Mission to Stabilize Haiti) raped and terrorized workers. Then-president Bill Clinton and the local crooks in the Haitian ruling class skimmed millions from "aid" projects at the height of a cholera outbreak. In Indonesia, UN-backed gold-mining operations by U.S. and Japanese capitalists used hundreds of tons of toxic mercury that continues to cause birth defects to this day. Today, the UN's largest military presence, 16,000 uniformed personnel, is stationed in the DRC—not to stop a long-running conflict between warring groups of local bosses, but to help secure the world's largest reserves of cobalt, an essential ingredient for electric vehicle batteries, computers, and cell phones.

The deadly battle between rebel guerrilla groups like M23 and various ruling-class factions is about how to best control the super-exploitation of masses of workers in extracting valuable resources. The fury of workers against MONUSCO was manipulated by the DRC Senate president, Modeste Bahati Lukwebo, who has personally welcomed Chinese investors in mining and the beef industry with open arms (All Africa, 12/21/2021; China Mining Association, 3/14). Ten days before the anti-UN uprising, he led a rally to attack MUNESCO's failure to pacify M23—and to win his base over to join the Congolese national army, the FARDC, which represents DRC ruling-class interests (The Conversation, 7/28). This is just the latest chapter in a long history of capitalist infighting--instigated by bosses in Rwanda and Uganda as well as in the U.S., Russia, and China—that have made the DRC a tinderbox for decades.

Minerals and mass murder

The DRC has an estimated $24 trillion in untapped deposits of cobalt, copper, diamonds, gold, zinc, tin, and potash. The Congo and its riches have played a major role in the modern history of imperialism, from the European imperialist competition of the 19th and early 20th centuries to the U.S. imperial expansion after World War II. In The African Roots of War (1915), the great Black historian W.E.B. Du Bois noted that the scramble for natural resources and cheap labor in Africa in the 1880s was a big part of the tensions that finally erupted in World War I. In a relentless hunt for ivory, rubber, and diamonds, King Leopold of Belgium led the imperialist scramble that created the "Congo Free State"—and a genocide of 10 million deaths.

During World War II, the U.S. ruling class outmaneuvered Nazi Germany in the Congo to seize control of the world's top uranium deposit and force workers to labor in radioactive mines. The raw materials from this deadly toil were used in the atomic bombs dropped on children, women, and men in Japan. In 1961, the U.S.-Soviet race for uranium and copper led the CIA—under an apparent directive from President Dwight Eisenhower (New York Times, 8/2/1981)—to plot the assassination of pro-Soviet Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba and consolidate the rule of the pro-U.S. Mobutu Sese Seko (Project Syndicate, 7/29). Today, as the U.S. and Russia remain locked in battle in Ukraine, the Chinese bosses are making inroads from Egypt to the DRC to the Horn of Africa. All three imperialist powers are vying for regional support in an increasingly unstable world order. The inevitable outcome is World War III.

Chinese rulers: thieves and exploiters

Chinese imperialism is no less dangerous or exploitative for workers across Africa. From 2000 to 2018, the DRC's capitalist rulers went to China for more than 50 loans, totaling $2.4 billion, to fund power, transport, and mining projects (Ventures Africa, 7/25). As these local bosses failed to repay their loans on time, Chinese companies seized the controlling shares of producing mines.

While the Chinese imperialists can benefit regardless of which local faction comes out on top, a recent agreement between bosses from the DRC and Uganda for roads threatens to undercut the profits of Rwandan bosses. This is the detonator that reactivated both state-sanctioned and proxy militias like M23 in recent months. MONUSCO, the largest peacekeeping operation in the world, has been useless in containing this two-sided terror, leaving workers with no good choice among misleaders (Deutche Welle, 7/28). As workers stormed multiple MONUSCO offices, the most telling response of the Chinese imperialists was to award its own unit of UN peacekeepers with UN Peace Medals for doing their part in maintaining the status quo (China Military Online, 7/29).

East African comrades: fight for communism!

In recent weeks, in response to years of capitalist super-exploitation, workers across sub-Saharan Africa have been protesting for double-digit wage increases. Their struggle for a decent life has grown even harder with the rising cost of living from the bosses' war in Ukraine. But just as local politicians in the DRC misled workers into attacking just the United Nations and not the entire capitalist class, union misleaders from Nigeria to South Africa to Uganda have kept workers in a dead-end reform struggle for higher wages instead of fighting to annihilate all capitalist production. In East Africa, a group of workers celebrating May Day pointed out the futile nature of all reforms and stressed the need for more workers to join Progressive Labor Party as the only way forward for our class (see CHALLENGE, 8/3). PLP fights to build a mass international base within the working class. We fight to replace the profit-hungry system of capitalism with a society based on our needs as workers. That's communism. Join Us!✪

Transit workers on strike, opens roads to revolutionary ideas

D.C transit workers demonstrate that strikes serve as schools for communism.

Landover, Maryland, August 1 Today over 170 Metro Access transit workers hit the bricks, striking against Transdev, a contractor for the Metro transit system in the Washington, D.C. region (see CHALLENGE, July 6, for an earlier rally). Transdev is a notorious multinational private transit company famous for screwing workers around the world. The mainly Black transit workers drive "on call" for people with disabilities or medical challenges. They are paid $17/hour, far less than their Metro counterparts. They are demanding a starting rate of $22.50/hour, rising to a top rate of $32, as well as a decent health and pension plan. Transdev has arrogantly dismissed their very modest demands. But Transdev is being hit with a fine of $1,000 per missed run, or over $100,000 a day, so they have an incentive to come up with a better contract offer. We'll squeeze these bosses until they cry uncle!

Several Progressive Labor Party members joined the bold militant picket line, distributing over 75 CHALLENGEs to the striking workers, and discussing how only a communist revolution that fights racism can get rid of the capitalist bosses and create a worker-run society. When communist ideas, combined with angry worker militancy, grip the working class, we will succeed in overthrowing the entire capitalist system of exploiters and imperialists!✪

Capitalism breeds sexism

The only (pro)choice is communism

CHICAGO, July 22– A multiracial, intergenerational group of around 30 Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members and friends gathered for a forum today as a means to educate and organize against capitalism's worsening racist and sexist attacks on workers' reproductive and family health. In the wake of the historically racist and sexist Supreme Court's reversal of Roe v. Wade, building the Party and fighting for international communist revolution remains the only real path forward for liberation and optimal health for our class.

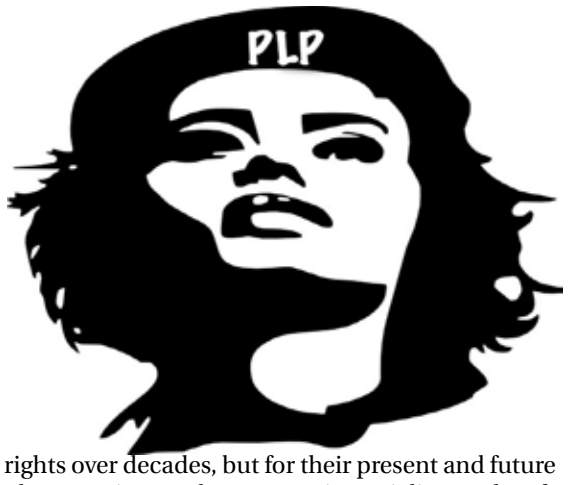
As capitalism globally spirals deeper into crisis, the bosses' need to resort to open fascism to salvage their profit system becomes more acute. Different factions of the capitalist ruling class seek to mobilize workers around the issue of abortion, but to follow their leadership guarantees only more misery, murder, and imperialist war.

In a movement dominated by pro-capitalist ideals of individualism, voting, and "autonomy," the international working class must instead choose collectivity and the power of a worker-run communist state as the solution. To be a part of PLP is to be the fighting alternative to build an antisexist and antiracist world!

Communist panel highlights real reproductive justice

The first half of the forum was a panel presentation from three PLP members. The first panelist, a veteran healthcare worker, gave a condensed history of centuries of racist and sexist attacks on workers' health under capitalism in the U.S. She detailed how getting medical treatments such as abortion has always been determined by race and class, with Black, Latin, and Asian and white workers suffering from little to no access. She shared a heart-wrenching personal story as a young worker who witnessed an involuntary surgery on a Black woman, a consequence of racist medical violence.

The second panelist gave an analysis of the political motives of the different wings of the U.S. ruling class regarding their approach to abortions and reproductive health. Of course the domestically-oriented, church-supported Small Fascist wing (see Glossary, page 6) of the U.S. bosses obviously deserve to be destroyed for their assault on workers' health. But, it is the openly-liberal, internationally-oriented, imperialist Big Fascist wing who in fact are more sinister and deadly. The panelist shredded these Big Fascists for not disregarding abortion



rights over decades, but for their present and future plans to win our class over to imperialist war by offering some minor reforms.

The final panelist concluded by pointing the communist way forward. She shared her own progression from chanting "My body, my choice" to her eventual conclusion that the individual "choices" that we make as workers cannot be separated from the overall political and socioeconomic structure of society. Since the capitalists dominate the economic and political landscape, their rotten influence infects all dimensions of our lives.

She argued that we need to see ourselves as part of the entire working class and fight for collective solutions. She concluded that only a worker-run communist state could guarantee worker rights, safety, and health, such as when the Soviet Union became the first place on earth to legalize abortion in 1922.

"Fighting for communism is the best way I know to fight back"

After the conclusion of the panel, the forum transitioned to an engaging open discussion. Many comments and questions were made about the struggle between reform and revolution, individualism versus collectivism, and voting versus direct workers' action.

One PLP member asked the panel about alternative actions for workers and the Party to take in the immediate sense, since voting has always been shown to be a dead end for our class. A panelist responded with the example of mostly women workers in Mexico in recent years, militantly squaring off and battling with riot police in different state capitols after the bosses there tried to roll back abortion rights. Because they organized in a mass way to confront the attack head on, the bosses were forced to retreat.

I just couldn't keep away, based on what I know. Fighting for communism is the best way I know to fight back."

Another forum participant stressed the importance of women workers educating others of the dangers of sexism and winning more people to be advocates on behalf of women's wellbeing. One of the PLP panelists agreed, but advanced the argument further that as workers we need to be fighting to take state power away from the capitalist bosses. Similar to the points made during the presentation, only by fighting for working-class power everywhere can we create lasting solutions to our collective needs.

Perhaps the most inspirational moment of the evening came from the veteran panelist when she shared what brought her back actively into the Party after some time away: "I just couldn't keep away, based on what I know. Fighting for communism is the best way I know to fight back."

Always fighting for communism

As we fight shoulder-to-shoulder alongside workers for expanded reproductive health access, childcare, and a thousand other reform struggles, we must never shy away from connecting these fights to capitalism. The working class continuously demonstrates an openness to communist politics when we advance them boldly and consistently. This forum was just one of the many ways to advance communist revolution in a mass way and motivate ourselves to fight back. Onward to more class struggle.✪

For homes: expel racist capitalism from the planet

We need homeless workers leadership to smash racist capitalist dsplacement

NEW YORK CITY, July 17— "We are still going through the same madness about homelessness…I don't know. Something's gotta change…this is not working." That's what a formerly homeless worker said at a demonstration at Gracie Mansion, racist kkkop Mayor Eric Adams' home. The rally called for an end to the City's racist displacement and immediate permanent housing. He is exactly right, and demonstrating with him were 40 workers and Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members. The rally was,) sponsored by the Open Hearts Initiative.

Mayor Eric Adams is leading the bosses' efforts to clear New York's streets of homeless workers by employing racist, fascist sweeps that try to force the homeless into shelters by destroying their street encampments. Yet many of these workers return to the streets because of the unsafe conditions in the shelters. Imagine that—homeless workers prefer the streets to the shelters! The revolutionary communist Progressive Labor Party is fighting to organize the entire international working class to smash racism, sexism and imperialism and build a communist world. That means a world run by and for the working class, where things like healthcare and housing are provided on the basis of need, not on racist profits.

Capitalism creates racist homelessness

Racist profits, sharpening fascist attacks, and U.S. imperialism's preparation for wider world wars are at the heart of the homeless crisis in cities, including the financial capital of the world's top imperialist power. As inflation skyrockets hand in hand with capitalist profits (PBS, 4/12), more U.S. workers than ever are paying most of their income for necessities like food, housing, transportation, and heating.

Nationwide, average apartment rents have increased 14.1 percent, and at least one in ten workers pay 55 percent of their monthly income on rent (Newsweek, 8/2). As "hot" real estate markets line the pockets of real estate capitalists, a 2020 study by the U.S. Government Accountability Office found that for every average $100 increase in the average rent, homelessness increases an estimated nine percent (Washington Post, 7/3). Meanwhile in the past year, average rents have increased almost $300.

In New York City, May 2022 saw a near-record breaking 18,863 homeless adults and 15,432 children in the shelter system; 93 percent of these workers and youth are Black, Latin or immigrant ("Basic Facts", coalitionforthehomeless.org). The bosses' politicians' response to homelessness is the same —whether liberal Big Fascist Democrat mayors like De Blasio and Adams, or the openly gutter Small Fascists running cities in states like Florida: they all rely on racist police terror to violently clear out encampments.

With homelessness at the highest levels since the Great Depression of the 1930s, PL'ers have been fighting shoulder to shoulder with homeless workers at the Lucerne Hotel from the beginning of the struggle and throughout the Covid-19 pandemic (see CHALLENGE, 7/21/20).

Lucerne workers expose Big Fascists

Homeless workers at Lucerne have been on the front lines exposing the Big Fascists' politicians and their liberal misleaders for two years, and this was not their first march on a fascist mayors' home (see CHALLENGE, 10/22/20). PLP salutes these workers' militant leadership and experience, and we will continue fighting and struggling alongside them to earn their leadership into our ranks! At the same time, we are active in sharing and struggling over communist ideas.

Continued on page 5

Stop racist deportations, workers have no nations!

Washington, DC July 19—Racist Texas Governor Abbot has spent over $6 million to send over 130 busloads of migrant workers, detained after crossing the U.S.-Mexican border, to Washington, DC as a political stunt. The daily arrivals at Union Station have risen to four to five buses per day (Washington Post, 7/14 and 7/19). This is the reality of a capitalist system built on fake, profit driven borders.The working-class, however, NEEDS a world without borders. To fight back against this racist deportation and rising fascist state, members of Progressive Labor Party (PLP) have joined mutual aid networks to help our working-class sisters and brothers survive. As we fight back we also remember that reform struggles won't stop rising fascism in the U.S. As the bosses struggle to regain control of their system in crisis we are watching the state continue to take more direct control and incite state terror (see page 6, glossary). But it is only with international communist revolution that we will smash our chains.

Migration myths of freedom

Forced to be economic pawns and political fodder at home, it is no surprise that workers from many countries, including Venezuela, Colombia, Angola, Cameroon, Congo, Cuba and Nicaragua continue to gather at northern Mexico's border with the U.S. Harrowing portrayals of their journeys to reach the border are peppered with inspiring accounts of working-class solidarity throughout North, Central and South America.

The response by the U.S. government to this forced migration has been brutal. It falsely claimed that there was a public health risk from Covid-19 and used Title 42 of the Public Health Law to keep workers in Mexico. Democrats won a reversal of the policy at the Supreme Court, but the Congress controlled by Democrats has kept this policy in play by refusing to release domestic funding. And the bosses' media has gone silent.

The "American Dream" is a capitalist hellscape

Today's oppression of migrant workers continues a long tradition of racist immigration policy in the U.S., always attuned to the needs of capitalism. If the bosses need cheap labor in agriculture or services, they bring in workers on a temporary basis. Or the bosses terrorize undocumented workers into accepting horrid working conditions and pay, simultaneously undercutting the employment and pay of other workers. When the bosses don't need them, they beef up deportation. Democrats and Republicans alike dance to the bosses' tune – remember that Barack Obama was decried at mass demonstrations as the "Deporter in Chief." Donald Trump and Joe Biden have continued that racist tradition.

Volunteer mutual aid workers have worked daily from 5:00 am until past midnight to find or secure housing and distribute food, a change of clothes, medicine for a cough, and a bus ticket to a desired destination. They have demanded government assistance for this humanitarian challenge. But Mayor Muriel Bowser, a Black woman politician in D.C. has rebuffed calls to tap into the city's reserve funds, declaring that it's a federal problem. Or perhaps she is telling these workers, if there is no bread, let them eat cake. Meanwhile, Covid-19 has sidelined many of the mutual aid workers while the pace of new arrivals increases.

The only solution is a communist revolution

Mutual aid cannot solve the big problems facing migrant workers. As more workers are pushed to destinations where they have at best tenuous ties, they are pushed to survive through spirit breaking, dangerous, and back-breaking means.

As communists, we struggle over the political limits of mutual aid and other reform struggles even as we strive to support our class brothers and sisters in the here and now. We have shared CHALLENGE, our party's newspaper, and our flyers with mutual aid workers and migrant workers.

Capitalism's immigration policy is not broken, it is operating just as intended to help capitalists maximize profits from the exploited labor of the desperate. It is an extension of capitalism's institutionalized racism that for centuries has allowed capitalists to profit from super-exploitation and divide the working class to weaken the struggles of all workers for a decent life and ultimately liberation from wage slavery.

The sinister capitalist system takes the energy of those trying to make change and funnels it into inevitably-limited service to others or drop-in-the-bucket reform that only reinforces the system. It is time to place our energy into the building of a disciplined revolutionary Progressive Labor Party whose members are deeply rooted in day to day workers' struggles against racist capitalism. At the same time we will lay the foundation for the destruction of the capitalist system and its state and replace it with workers' power, collectivity, and equality – communism.✪

Part 11: Black communists in the Spanish Civil War

James Yates: 'I was part of their dreams, and they were a part of mine'

This is part 11 of a series about Black communists in the Spanish Civil War. In the early 1930's the urban bourgeoisie (capitalists) of Spain, supported by most workers and many peasants, overthrew the violent, repressive monarchy to form a republic. In July 1936 the Spanish army, eventually commanded by Francisco Franco, later the fascist dictator, rebelled to reestablish the repressive monarchy. Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy gave Franco massive military aid.

In 1936 the International Communist Movement, called the Comintern, headquartered in the Soviet Union and led by Joseph Stalin, organized volunteers, mainly workers from more than 60 countries into the International Brigades (IBs) to go to Spain to defend the Republic. Black workers, especially Black communists, emphasized the importance of fighting racism to win anything for the working class. And they brought this antiracist fightback with them when they returned to the United States. They were building a movement they hoped would lead to communist revolution around the world. They succeeded in organizing millions around communist ideas and practices. But the movement believed that uniting with liberal bosses to defend the Republic in Spain would further the fight for communism. This was part of the united front against fascism, which resulted in only fortifying the bosses system and laid the basis for the corruption of the old communist movement.

In the Progressive Labor Party, we are against any unity with capitalists. They all have to go and the working class must rule: that's communism.

If the working class is to seize and hold state power throughout the world, Black workers' leadership is essential. That is the only way our class can destroy racism, the lifeblood of capitalism. The following is a story of one such leader, James Yates.

Yates antiracist in the making

James Yates was born in 1906 in Quitman, Mississippi, nourished on stories of how African Americans enjoyed democracy during Reconstruction; was taught by a schoolteacher who insisted that one day America would have a Black president; was touched by the vision of his Garveyite uncle, who eventually moved to the all-Black town of Boley, Oklahoma; and was told over and over again about his other uncle, who had armed himself to defend his family from the Klan, and of the Irish immigrant neighbor who had assisted him by providing ammunition. In the small town of Quitman, Mississippi, the young Yates witnessed not only countless episodes of racism and violence but also stark examples of internationalism, Black nationalism, Pan-Africanism, and interracial solidarity.

The building of the KKK in the South by the U.S. ruling class during this period is well known. What is less well known is the history of multiracial unity and fight back among the working class, led by Black workers unwilling to peacefully submit to forced segregation and the advent of Jim Crow laws. James Yates came out of this tradition of fighting back against racism. Escaping the South in 1923 Yates "rode the rails" to Chicago where he worked in the stockyards.

During his first mass demonstration - a march to Springfield, Illinois, that had been organized by the Party-he came to realize the international significance of the Communist Party's struggle for jobs, relief, and equality:

> *I was a part of their hopes, their dreams, and they were a part of mine. And we were a part of an even larger world of marching poor people. By now I understood that the Depression was world-wide and that the unemployed and the poor were demonstrating and agitating for jobs and food all over the globe. We were millions.*

Yates becomes member of communist party

Moving to New York City, he became a founding member of the railroad Dining Car Waiter's

Union and became active in the unemployment councils, the Scottsboro defense campaign, and the movement to free Angelo Herndon, a young communist organizer jailed in Alabama for trying to form a union. In 1936 he joined the Communist Party, becoming secretary of his branch. All of the mentioned organizations and movements were led to a large degree by the Communist Party and were centers of the class struggle against racism, struggles that brought many thousands of workers into the communist movement.

Yates set sail for France in March, 1937, arriving in Spain after a dangerous crossing by climbing the Pyrenees mountains. He served as a truck driver, then was transferred to the Thaelmann Battalion of German volunteers. Wounded in a bombing raid, he was hospitalized. When told he was being sent home, he protested: "But the war's not over!"

Communist fighter returns to Jim Crow U.S.

Yates returned to the U.S. in February, 1938 to a war hero's welcome from the American Left, followed by a slap in the face by American racists. On his first night home in New York, buoyed by the kisses and handshakes he received at the docks, Yates was denied a room at the hotel his comrades had planned to stay in. Although the white veterans checked in without a problem, when Yates stood before the registrar, the clerk simply looked at him and said "No Vacancy":

> *Inwardly I winced. So soon? I had hardly left the boat and here it was. After having experienced being welcomed in cafes and hotels in Spain and France, I was doubly shocked to be hit so quickly. The pain went as deeply as any bullet could have done [sic). I had the dizzy feeling I was back in the trenches again. But this was another front. I was home." Needless to say, his comrades promptly gave up their accommodations and moved on.*

Yates memoralizes communist struggle

During World War II Yates joined the Army Signal Corps but, like many U.S. veterans of the Spanish Civil War, he was not permitted to serve overseas. After the war he studied electronics and had a radio repair shop. He was active in the International Brotherhood of Railroad Porters and head of the Chelsea-Village NAACP branch in New York City.

In 1986 Yates published Mississippi to Madrid. It is the only autobiography of a Black American communist who served in the Spanish Civil War. It is full of detail about Yates' life in Mississippi, his political activities, what he experienced and saw in the Spanish Civil War, his comrades in arms – many of whom were killed there – and the people he met, including Langston Hughes.

In 1987 Yates was invited to be writer in residence at a writers' retreat in Maine, where he stayed until 1992. He died in 1993.✪

Sources: ALBA database; African-Americans in the Spanish Civil War (Hall, 1991); Brandt, Joe, ed.. Black Americans in the Spanish People's War Against Fascism 1936-1939 James Yates, Mississippi to Madrid (two editions, 1986 and 1988).

To solve housing crisis: expel racist capitalism from the planet

Continued from page 3

For example, one problem with today's demonstration was that the primary goal of the organization sponsoring the march was to get coverage from the capitalist media. We are organizing and struggling with homeless workers on the grass roots level rather than relying on getting attention from the bosses' media. Only in this way can workers build confidence in themselves and each other in working class leadership, not politicians or boss-led reform groups. Only in this way can our class organize a revolutionary communist PLP and smash racist homelessness once and for all. To do this, we distributed CHALLENGE at the protest, and talked with our friends and many of the participants.

Fight for workers' housing, fight to tear down capitalism!

Winning workers to the fight against homelessness helps to tear down the wall of racism that separates us today. The only reason Adams is doing the sweeps is because the developers, landlords, and Wall Street are concerned about the "appearance" of New York City. Seeing homelessness is bad for business. Capitalism is incapable of solving this issue!

As their economy sinks into another recession, the bosses would rather spend $54.6 billion on weapons manufacturers sending weapons to imperialist war in Ukraine, rebuilding Madison Square Garden, and building more luxury housing.

The Progressive Labor Party puts all confidence in the international working class. We fight in the struggle for workers' housing against the bosses' politicians and their racist police terror, and for a mass PLP that will lead international communist revolution. Racism and homelessness will only be ended by millions of workers united to fight for communism. JOIN US!✪

LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.

Public healthcare worker unites with transit strikers

Today I joined the striking Metro Access transit workers on their picket line (see page 3). They are the "essential workers" who the bosses pretend to thank but then attack when it comes to wages, benefits, and safety. They have "served the people," especially elderly and disabled residents during the pandemic. Their shop steward estimated that 50 percent of them have had at least one episode of Covid-19, most likely due to transmission on the job.

The CDC initially required they stay home 10 days following a Covid-19 infection but now has decided it is ok to return to work after five days, an unsafe practice with the Ba.5 variant sweeping the country. The change in CDC guidelines show that their capitalist bosses are happy to have workers get sick and die in the name of profit and "the economy." Worse, the workers get only two sick days per year, so they have had to go without pay for the other days (unless they get workers' compensation, which only a couple have managed to do).

The bosses don't require testing in order to return to work and there is no contact tracing or informing workers of exposures even though the bosses have data to do so, further threatening workers' health. The drivers are issued N95 masks every morning, but riders – many of whom are going to doctor's visits – are not required to wear them in the Metro Access vans. The bosses frequently require "ride sharing" – multiple riders in the van – which increases the risks of transmission. When I showed the strikers how easy it is to measure carbon dioxide levels in the van (which correlates with airborne risk of Covid-19 transmission), they were interested in doing it themselves. Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members are fighting for masking, ventilation, testing and treatment. Bringing more public health workers into the fight into the fight will also strengthen our Party and sharpen the struggle for workers' power, which is Communism.

Workers are hungry for communism

At the recent Marxist Literary Group conference, I had the opportunity to talk with several food service workers in the building.

On two occasions I offered a copy of CHALLENGE to the worker. One said: "I need this!" The other said: "Great! I'm going to read this at home."

CHALLENGE is an excellent way to bring communist ideas to workers hungry to understand their reality

Thanks to all of our comrades whose work produces the paper.

Remembering Camacho's words

I attended a summer project in the 1980s where I remember Epifanio Camacho. He was grounded, patient, wise and didn't waste words (see obituary, page 8).

He was a striking man who commanded respect without talking, dimmed the lights on any youthful "know-it-all" chatter among summer project youth. He carried his earned status with a gentle, kind air. He calmly talked about the inequalities & injustices in the San Joaquin Valley. He explained what fundamental problems would still exist for farmworkers if sellout Cesar Chavez only bargained for acceptable reforms instead of revolutionary change.

Chavez was making a bargain that would result in trusting the very people that were literally pouring pesticides all over all of them from planes, obviously giving them cancer en masse and effectively treating the farmworkers as wage slaves. Whether they lived in labor camps or not, the farmworkers lived at the poverty line while working to the bone in Central California, the San Joaquin Valley, where 25 percent of U.S. food, including 40 percent fruits and nuts, is grown.

NYC bosses worried about nuclear attacks

Here's a link to their ridiculous message. https://youtu.be/N-5d7V4Sbqk

Here's the wording in case they're smart enough to take it down.

It starts off with a siren. Then a young person, all in black, talks in front of a city residential building.

"So there's been a nuclear attack. Don't ask me how or why, just know that the big one has hit."

"Ok, so what do we do? There are three important steps that I want you to remember."

"Step one, get inside, fast. You, your friends, your family … get inside. And no, staying in the car is not an option. You need to get into a building and move away from the windows."

"Step two: Stay inside. Shut all doors and windows. Have a basement? Head there. If you don't have one, get as far into the middle of the building as possible. If you were outside after the blast, get clean immediately. Remove and bag all outer clothing to keep radioactive dust or ash away from your body."

"Step three: stay tuned. Follow the media for more information. Don't forget to sign up for Notify NYC for official alerts and updates. And don't go outside, until officials say it's safe. Alright? You've got this."

They forgot to say take your "radiation pill." You're right; there isn't any.

One friend of mine told me about this and I was sure they were kidding and had made it up. This is obviously the result of the war in the Ukraine.

In 1961, I was involved in a mass organization in my high school fighting against nuclear war when the U.S. attempted to invade Cuba. The U.S. government used Cuban refugees as cannon fodder. I realized then that the biggest danger of nuclear war was not proliferation of weapons but imperialism (the last and current stage of capitalism). That's also when I decided to join a real communist party.

Although already moving fast towards capitalism, the then Soviet Union put nuclear missiles into Cuba. In October, 1963, the threat of nuclear war seemed imminent. Back then we had "fallout shelter" signs on many buildings.

The mass organization I'm currently working in has been debating this war. Many people are trying to figure out who to blame so they can pick a side.

(A) The corrupt capitalist government of Ukraine which allies with fascist militias?

(B) The imperialist capitalist governments of Europe and the U.S. which have been trying to build their N.A.T.O. alliance against Russia and China?

(C) The imperialist capitalist fascist government of Russia?

(D) None of the above!

We are the side of " none of the above." We don't take the side of any of these ruling classes. Our side is the international working class in every country. Today inter-imperialist rivalry has caused the war in the Ukraine.

The international working class are the ones who suffer the most from these wars. This is not history repeating itself as farce, but on the brink of tragedy.

We have been having success in our local group raising these ideas. Our local group came together on a statement that doesn't take the side of any of these governments. Unfortunately the state and national leadership of this organization, just as in the 1960s, sees itself as an arm of the Democratic party and has hardly had any demonstrations against this dangerous war.

The ruling class thinks they can survive in their bunkers. We know where they are, because the working class built these bunkers!

New NYT editor signals heating concerns of China

In April, the New York Times announced the appointment of a new executive editor of their paper, Joseph F. Kahn. Part of a very privileged, upper-class family, Kahn cut his journalistic teeth on reporting from China. At one time he was expelled from China. He won a Pulitzer Prize for his highly critical reporting on China.

His appointment as executive editor of the leading mouthpiece of the main wing of the ruling class, the Big Fascist liberals, is significant. Many of the leading ruling class intellectuals who have been highly critical of the U.S./NATO proxy war in Ukraine have been pushing for U.S.imperialism to shift its attention to what they view as the main enemy, Chinese expansionism. They are upset that the war in Ukraine is cementing the alliance of Russia and China. The conflict within the main wing of the U.S. ruling class between those who emphasize the goal of isolating Russia and have been leading the charge of NATO towards the east and those who want a shift to China and the Pacific is serious. The appointment of Kahn suggests that the ruling class is beginning to realize that they miscalculated when they pushed the Ukrainians into a war in which the Russians had no choice but to intervene. This war is accelerating the decline of U.S. military and dollar hegemony in the world.

The U.S. ruling class is not as strong as it appears. There are too many divisions and they do not have a unified leadership as contrasted with Russia and China. Several of their important European allies are also deeply divided internally, France and Germany in particular.

The opportunities for the Party to grow are increasing daily. Let's do it!

'Thanks for book review!'

I especially liked the book review about the Chinese Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) in the July 20, CHALLENGE. I was a student in London during this early period and although we didn't have too much information about it, I was impressed by the GPCR having its start in cultural spheres. The Peking Opera, generally a stronghold of tradition and feudalism, with plenty of characterizations of women warriors who had died in battle and come back as angels, was a major venue for the class struggle.

The Legend Of The Red Lantern was such a revolutionary opera. It is the fascinating, true story of an underground, communist woman railroad worker fighting the Japanese invaders. Its revolutionary theme, in what was once the provenance of the capitalist roaders, became a victory for the workers with each performance.

As the review points out, the book gives"…clear signals that communist politics and principles were not leading China - capitalist politics were."

GLOSSARY

COMMUNIST TERMS

Fascism

Capitalism's response to a crisis of their system, when the bosses can no longer sustain the charade of liberal democracy and resort to more direct control and state terror instead. Fascism is marked by the ruling capitalists disciplining their own ranks to serve the urgent needs of the capitalist state and weather the crisis. To defend their system from internal and external threats, they use all the means available in their state apparatus, including violence. To build unity within their class and loyalty from workers, they rely on nationalist politics and calls for sacrifice. Their strategy is to mislead the working class to kill our working class sisters and brothers in the next inter-imperialist war.

Big Fascists

The Big Fascists are the dominant finance capitalist faction of the U.S. ruling class. They represent the wealthiest and most powerful bosses in the U.S., including multinational banks like Chase and Citibank, multinational oil companies like ExxonMobil, the big automakers, Boeing, Amazon, and the major media companies. As the dominant grouping since World War II, the Big Fascists were the architects of the liberal world order with the U.S. bosses on top. Their dominance rests on U.S. financial and military power and its strategic control of the Middle East and the flow of oil to Europe, Asia, and Africa. To sustain this dominance, they need to rebuild a huge, multiracial military for inter-imperialist war, most likely with China.

Small Fascists

The Small Fascists are a group of domestically oriented U.S. capitalists who are challenging the Big Fascists over the direction of U.S. imperialism. Since their interests are less tied to controlling the flow of oil, they are against heavy taxation to keep troops in the Middle East and in general oppose costly military bases and invasions. They're willing to rely on a smaller, whiter army, backed by nuclear weapons and the Air Force. They use open racism to build a political following.

Camacho: 'You should be bold and lead by example'

Continued from page 8

television only showed the pickets held by the workers won to pacifism, being beaten and bloodied while they were kneeling. The racists bragged they were coming for us next. We had a big meeting and I said to the workers, 'We'll be waiting for them! Tomorrow not even a housewife should come to the picket without a weapon.' On the morning of the battle, all the women were showing off how carefully they'd hidden their blades! We were ready for them in one day, and we met violence with violence. To this day, over 30 years later, the Teamsters never returned to Delano. Not long after the fight, the local government disbanded the local police and left the area to the state troopers.

What had changed for me was during that time I met the PLP. Our struggle continued from 'below,' from the ranks of the workers. Most of the workers were used to fighting and the most militant of us formed a new working-class leadership. What kept this leadership together now were revolutionary ideas. The UFW was afraid of the PLP, and afraid of the ideas in our newspaper, CHALLENGE. Chavez publicly prohibited any UFW member from buying CHALLENGE, and anyone caught reading it was threatened with immediate expulsion.

"We were in a tough spot. We knew everyone, but they feared being thrown out of the UFW. Now, I am a communist. I learned how to write communist leaflets for the workers. We had many meetings discussing how to reach the workers, and we started reaching them. Workers began joining PLP. Before long, the workers started placing communist ideas above the reformism of the UFW and Chavez.

Over time our base grew, and we got up to selling 500 CHALLENGEs a week. Can you imagine the sight of hundreds of workers reading CHALLENGE at lunchtime? Imagine! Well, that's what happened. Our whole community was affected by communist ideas. An entire family would share one paper. The workers' children organized PLP clubs in the high school. Right here in my home we had many PLP dances and events. We would have red flags everywhere. Workers would let their children go to our events because we all knew each other, and they trusted my security abilities.

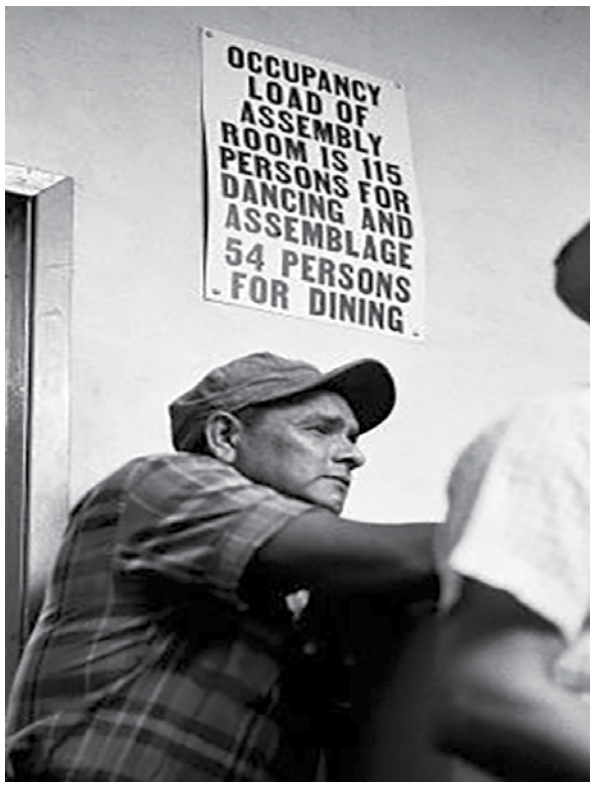
One thing PLP does that you never saw from Chavez or the UFW was criticism and self-criticism. Every time we came out of a meeting, I felt like I'd taken a shower. And the work always improved. And it was easier to organize this way.

In PLP we're building a base for communist revolution. You can't say it's easy….Sometimes we're not aware of how little things impact the future. Years ago, two coworkers from Oaxaca joined the Party. Then they got deported and built the Party in Oaxaca. Later they became inactive, but along the way recruited other people to the Party. Just yesterday I met two young comrades participating in this Summer Project from Oaxaca who are very strong. They joined as a direct result of those first two! Now our work there is getting strong. Everything we do counts.

What's the key to organizing? How do you start when you're all alone? Wherever you work, you always start by finding the worker who's most discontented with the boss…Listen carefully to what they say. Use their discontent as an opportunity to explain why things are this way. Eat with them every day, or as often as you can.

Beyond that, there's no formula. You should be bold and lead by example. Go to the bathrooms when no one's around and leave literature. Go to the parking lot and put leaflets on every car window or in the windshield wipers, including your own. Then, on your break, feel them out. If they support our ideas, show them it was you! Now they're contacts… You'll find out that when things really get going, even occasional readers and friends who haven't appeared to show much interest will step up and risk their lives for us. You'll see. It all starts with you! You need the initiative to find a way to get communist ideas around.

I like talking to the younger comrades because the potential is in the youth. I've never been to school, but I've always wanted to go because I love to learn. All workers want to learn. Inside of all of us is a struggle of opposites, between ignorance and wanting to learn more. If your education is inadequate in school because of racism, sexism, and nationalism, you must organize against it. Learn as much as you can but remember that everything you learn, you must put at the service of the working class.✪



Rest in power Camacho

RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

Jim Crow Biden wants border wall

NBC News, 7/28–The Biden administration on Thursday authorized completion of the Trump-funded U.S.-Mexico border wall in an open area of southern Arizona near Yuma, where four wide gaps make it among the busiest corridors for illegal crossings…Completion of the wall was at the top of former President Donald Trump's agenda, and border security remains a potent issue for candidates of both parties going into this year's primary elections. President Joe Biden halted new wall construction after he took office, but he has since made closing the gaps just south of Yuma a priority. It was unclear when construction would begin. The statement said officials will move "as expeditiously as possible, while still maintaining environmental stewardship" by consulting affected parties.

War and drought threaten to kill many workers in Somalia

The Economist, 7/28–Somalia faces a famine. The worst drought in 40 years is killing livestock and causing crops to shrivel.Russia's invasion of Ukraine has exacerbated the crisis by raising grain prices, meaning that farmers and herders cannot afford to supplement their diets. Roughly 7 million people, or 40% of Somalia's population, are struggling to find enough food to eat. Around 1.4 million children are severely malnourished. Experts say that, unless urgent action is taken, this famine may be even deadlier than the one that claimed more than 250,000 Somalis in 2011.

Haiti: assassinations & gangs point to U.S.-China rivalry

Nikkei Asia, 8/7/2021–The assassination of Haitian President Jovenel Moise … has potential repercussions as far away as China, which has played a diplomatic chess game with the U.S. over the impoverished Caribbean nation. Beijing has dangled coronavirus vaccines and other aid as it seeks to persuade Haiti, one of the 15 countries that maintain diplomatic relations with Taiwan, to cut those ties, critics say…Republican lawmakers Tom Tiffany and Scott Perry of the U.S. House Taiwan Caucus recently sent Secretary of State Antony Blinken a letter warning of the "potential ripple effects this assassination may have on stability, both within Haiti and across the wider region -- as well as the doors it may open to political interference by the People's Republic of China."The Chinese Communist Party "will most certainly seek to take advantage of the political turmoil in Haiti to further marginalize U.S. and Taiwanese interests," the lawmakers wrote. Haiti is not the only focus in the region of Beijing's attempts to isolate Taipei. Panama, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic all severed ties with Taiwan in favor of China between 2017 and 2018. Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen has taken pains to try holding on to Taipei's remaining partners. She visited Haiti in 2019 to shore up their relationship, and Taiwan donated masks there last year to help with the country's coronavirus response.

Pelosi visit to Taiwan threatens military escalation by China

Foreign Affairs, 7/29–"The military thinks it's not a good idea right now." That was U.S. President Joe Biden's observation in late July about House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's planned trip to Taiwan, which is reportedly scheduled for next month [August]. It would be wrong to think…that Pelosi's travel plans will determine whether a showdown materializes in the Taiwan Strait. In reality, the United States and China are barreling toward such a crisis—and it will be far riskier than previous standoffs. China, possessing significant military capabilities and less concerned about preserving its relations with the United States, is now far more willing to respond to a perceived provocation with escalation than it was during previous crises…. To send a message, China will now have to do something that rises significantly above that kind of baiting, which means its options are increasingly escalatory…As CIA Director William J. Burns recently said, "I wouldn't underestimate President Xi's determination to assert China's control—the People's Republic of China's control—over Taiwan. I think the risks of that become higher, it seems to us, the further into this decade that you get."

Comrade Epifanio Camacho, beloved leader of the working class

Epifanio Camacho, a courageous and militant farmworker, loyal member of Progressive Labor Party (PLP), and lifetime fighter for the international working class, died on July 4 at the age of 98. As an early leader of the United Farm Workers (UFW), Epifanio organized a strike of rose grafters in the San Joaquin Valley in 1965. He went on to play a central role in the historic strikes against the grape vineyard bosses in the late 1960s.

In the mid-1970s, Epifanio was purged from the UFW by the class traitor and sellout Cesar Chavez. Their split was inevitable. Chavez was a pacifist who made a religion out of non-violence. He allied with reformist politicians like Robert F. Kennedy and racist AFL-CIO boss George Meany, and relied on boycotts and the bosses' legal machinery. He was a nationalist who attacked undocumented workers and turned them in to be deported. By contrast, Epifanio believed in the unity of the entire working class, and that no boycott could rival the power of a strike at the point of production. He was fearless in captaining a picket line, in fighting strikebreaking scabs and the Teamster thugs sent to protect them. He sabotaged countless police cars with his secret weapon: children's toy jacks, strewn across roads with their pointed side up to puncture the cops' tires. He was arrested more times than he could count. His sister and brother workers knew they could count on him to put their class interests first.

Even before Epifanio joined PLP , in 1974, Chavez had accused him of being a communist—a label he wore proudly for the rest of his life. He played an instrumental role in building the Party among farmworkers in California and, by extension, in Mexico. Though Epifanio had no formal education, he was a brilliant thinker, a true worker intellectual who made enormous contributions as both a writer of leaflets and a distributor of CHALLENGE. (In the space of 11 months in 1982, his network sold more than 20,000 newspapers, with each sale carefully recorded.) While the pacifist misleader Cesar Chavez may be featured in the capitalist history books, it is Epifanio Camacho who made a historic contribution to the international communist movement—who did his part to change the world.

Here are some excerpts from Epifanio's talk on base building at a PLP summer project in 2008 in Delano, California:

After I started organizing other workers, one day I was arrested and taken to jail, and then to the bosses' court. On that day, the role of the bosses' state became clear. On one side there were the rich bosses with their legal system and other means of oppression.

And on the other side there was the working class. And the day that I walked out of the courthouse, I realized that the workers would sooner or later lose every battle against the bosses unless we organize a revlution against the capitalist state.

I spent five years next to [Cesar Chavez] as a UFW leader. He was scared all the time, and all the workers saw it and knew it. Most workers met secretly and took their own initiative. For example, we decided that no one in our community should rent a house to a scab. When this happened, their houses were burnt down!

"Racists organized by the Teamsters Union started showing up to pickets with baseball bats. The UFW was urging everyone to kneel in the face of violence. The bosses'

Continued on page 7

Camacho a striking man and communist leader till the end

PLP-Mexico remembers Epifanio

The PLP Collective in Mexico is saddened by the death of our comrade Camacho. His living example, his teachings, and his commitment and confidence in the international working class were proof of the power of communist ideas and actions when workers make them their own. We will honor his memory fighting tirelessly against this criminal capitalist system. In what follows, two comrades detail their experiences with comrade Epifanio.

From Mexico City: *I met Epifanio when I first joined PLP in 1975, while visiting Rodrigo, his comrade-in-arms in the fields. Rodrigo was bedridden, but eager to learn. He asked Epifanio, "Who was Lenin?" Epifanio explained how the Bolsheviks led rural and urban workers to take power. The same day, we carried a bundle of CHALLENGE newspapers to Cortez, another one of his comrades, who right away asked, "Are you sure this is the right way? My friends have many questions about the paper." Epifanio reassured him, "Don't be afraid, we have nothing to lose, and we could win! We need to be daring. Next time we will meet with your friends to clarify any doubts." On other occasions when we went to distribute the paper house to house, workers kept asking for the "supplement"—a one-page flyer using the simple language of the fieldworkers, where Epifanio explained communism, nationalism, racism, and imperialism. Truth be told, workers demanded that flyer. Through the distribution of CHALLENGE and the flyers in the fieldworkers' communities, and in the fields where Epifanio lived and worked, this process led to a mass understanding of communist ideas.*

Epifanio challenged the owners, the police, la migra, the liberal politicians, the religious leaders, and all sorts of capitalist vermin. An undocumented worker who knew him once told me, "Many undocumented fieldworkers knew that Epifanio's house was a sanctuary for them." In reality, it was so for all those ready to fight for communism.

Epifanio's unassuming character, determination, and deep confidence in the workers have been lessons for life. To remember Epifanio Camacho, long live communism!

From Oaxaca, Mexico: *I met Epifanio when I was an undocumented worker in Delano, California. Comrade Camacho was a communist teacher for us campesinos, because he was always looking for the best ways for us to understand dialectical materialism in our study groups. He and Luis Ventura were responsible for bringing the revolutionary communist ideas of PLP to Oaxaca, which today inform our work. We remember his commitment to promoting the party line in a massive way in Delano and McFarland, and the insight he developed to transcend the reformist politics of Cesar Chavez and embrace communist revolutionary ideas. ¡Hasta siempre camarada Epifanio!*

CHALLENGE strives to be the communist paper for and by the international working class. We call on all readers, supporters, and comrades to submit class struggle articles, analytical pieces, original photos and graphics, letters, and political cartoons. The next deadline is the **Friday evening of August 19.** Send to desafio.challenge@gmail.com. For some guidance and house style rules, please go to www.bit.ly/338ZJow

All submissions are open to collective discussion, struggle, and change. See box on page 2 about fighting for collectivity and against a cult of the individual.

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